BOOK REVIEWS

O, for a thousand tongues to sing: a history of singing schools in early Canada, by Dorothy H. Farquharson. Available from the author, R.R. 2, Waterdown, Ontario LOR 2HO, 1983. (iv, 114p., $13.50)

This informal history takes its title from the first line of a hymn by Charles Wesley. Dorothy Farquharson writes with enthusiasm and affection about a little-researched phase of Canadian music - the rural singing-school movement, on which, as she persuasively comments, much of the later development of choral societies (and hence of urban musical culture) depended. The movement begins with the sojourn of James Lyon (the first native American tunebook compiler) in Nova Scotia in the mid-18th century. It continues with activities in various parts of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Quebec, in the period 1780-1830, by which time there are parallel activities along the upper St. Lawrence and in the Niagara, Cobourg, and York areas of Upper Canada. Sporadic evidences suggest further parallels a generation or so later in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and in Victoria on the West Coast.

The movement was both social and musical. The dominant figures were independent operators - musical traveling salesmen - who gathered after-supper groups in small communities and taught them sight singing and a repertoire of tunes which could then be performed with confidence in family gatherings and in services of divine worship. Teachers such as Stephen Humbert in Saint John or Mark Burnham in Port Hope added original composition to their talents, and their tunes are among our earliest locally-composed music. They are no mean counterparts to the likes of William Billings, as I recently had a chance to appreciate when hearing a Humbert anthem sung with gusto by an amalgamated choir of 300 voices in New Brunswick. But in their own time, Dorothy Farquharson reminds us, their work seemed impossibly crude to eurocentric immigrants such as Susannah Moodie, who referred to the singing-school entrepreneurs as "men who have followed the plough all their lives, and know about as much of the divine science they pretend to teach as one of their oxen" (quoted, p.59)

Farquharson was moved to explore the subject, she says, by curiosity about her own great-grandfather, who taught singing-schools in the Niagara Peninsula. The liveliest sections of the work are her quotations from local church archives and diaries and from conversations with seniors, recalling a strong grassroots tradition with occasionally a special flavor or accent. An owner of a rare edition of Alexander Davidson's Sacred Harmony told her of grandparents whose "association in their (singing-school) classes resulted in their marriage. The family maintained a custom of singing sacred music after the evening meal. The father struck the note and the family would join in singing hymns and learning new ones." (p.40)

The early tunebook publications used as texts and anthologies in these schools are sketched interestingly, and an appendix gives in photographic reproduction a generous sampling of tunes and a typical instructional preface. My only criticism is the lack of comment of these.

For example, the tunes include two different ones entitled "Port Hope": both are original; one is unattributed but may be by Alexander Davidson, while the other is attributed to "Clarke" - evidently not James Paton Clarke; both illustrate fuguing treatment.

Examples of several notation methods are shown. An isolated one from early-19th-century Jordan, Ontario, shows the Scottish tune "Martyrs" in a letter-notation similar to that employed by John Tufts in Boston a century earlier. Shape-note notation (for some reason the author calls it "shaped-note notation") is illustrated from the only Canadian example - the 1845 edition of Sacred Harmony. The suggestion is made that it was further used in Mennonite congregations in Canada, and even still is, but we are not told what their publications were or are. Staffless number-notation is also illustrated, from its use in a singing school in Brantford; the publication cited is a U.S. import, however, and seems to have been again an isolated example.

May this attractive account stimulate further explorations at local levels of this vital element of our musical past.

-John Beckwith
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Encyclopédie de la musique au Canada. Rédigé par Helmut Kallmann, Gilles Potvin, Kenneth Winters. Version française. Montreal: Fides, 1983. (xxxi, 1142p., $75.00)

Lorsque, il y a quelques années, on voulait se renseigner sur la vie musicale au Canada, il fallait recourir à quelques ouvrages limités à l'essential, tels l'excellente et indispensable History of music in Canada de Helmut Kallmann ou la discutée Musique au Québec de Willy Amtmann. Comme ouvrage de référence, il y avait le désuet Dictionnaire biographique des musiciens canadiens, publié en 1935 par les Soeurs de Sainte-Anne. À l'échelle du Canada, l'Encyclopédie de la musique au Canada n'a pu d'ailleurs, dans sa bibliographie générale, recenser qu'une trentaine d'ouvrages ou articles canadiens ayant un rapport avec la musique.

Si la musique contemporaine est, grâce aux efforts déployés par le Centre de musique canadienne, bien servie par les dictionnaires, des articles de fond, des brochures et des dépliants, il n'en est pas de même pour ce qui est antérieur à la Première Guerre mondiale. Le chercheur devait donc retrousser ses manches et affronter les archives privées (jalousement gardées) et publiques: il devait également accepter les éternuements qu'engendre la poussière du passé, ou encore s'atteler aux anciens périodiques et aux journaux, feuilletant, année par année, des écrits remarquables ou inexacts et parfois involontairement cocasses. Qui ne se souvient d'en avoir appris davantage sur le chapeau d'une charmante cantatrice ou sur le commerce de son père que sur le programme musical auquel participait l'artiste? J'ai encore en mémoire l' "inspiration ravissante" que l'on prête à une cantate de Calixa La-

vallée et l'importance accordée à un "Royal Dindon" (!) présenté à la Pointe-aux-Trembles dans les années 1879-80 (Le Canada musical).

La rédaction d'un dictionnaire encyclopédique sérieux était donc devenue indispensable, et le mécène torontois Floyd Chalmers l'avait bien compris, lui qui, en 1969, avait été sensibilisé par un article de John Beckwith soulignant la quasi-inexistence de la documentation sur la musique au Canada. Il aura fallu près de 10 ans à une équipe de 426 collaborateurs et recherchistes pour mener à bien cette enterprise.

Parue en anglais en 1981, l'Encyclopédie s'est fait désirer dans sa version française, peut-être faute de marché et surtout de ressources financières. Si, personnellement, j'ai préféré me priver de cette source précieuse de renseignements pendant deux ans, je ne regrette pas d'avoir été patiente et d'avoir fait l'acquisition d'un exemplaire français, ne serait-ce que pour les corrections et les mises à jour que comprend l'édition de 1983.

Riche de 1142 pages (par rapport aux 1076 de l'édition anglaise), l'Encyclopédie comprend 3161 entrées classées, bien sûr, par ordre alphabétique. De Jacques Cartier, mentionné dans quelques articles, à la guitariste Liona Boyd (dont la photo est fort jolie.....) de Paul Anka à Gilles Tremblay, sans oublier les p'tits Simard (!) des groupes rock qui ont brillé pendant une dizaine d'années aux informations concernant des chansons folkloriques bien connues (À la claire fontaine), en passant par l'historique de certains lieux musicaux, l'Encyclopédie tente de faire le point sur la musique au Canada sous tous ses aspects tant classiques, musicologiques et folkloriques que populaires.

Si l'on ne peut que se réjouir d'une telle somme d'informations, on s'étonnera par contre de la disproportion entre certains articles. Avec ce qu'ils ont pu compiler ou découvrir sur des musiciens du passé, les collaborateurs de l'Encyclopédie ont en général rédigé des articles sobres et appuyés sur des références précises, soulignant avec honnêteté les lacunes auxquelles ils se sont heurtés. Malheureusement, dès que l'on aborde le domaine contemporain, certains articles font étalage de données secondaires sur des compositeurs ou des interprètes dont seul l'avenir nous dira s'ils valaient la place qu'on leur a accordée. Ainsi, par example, le groupe Beau Dommage, qui a fait carrière entre 1973 et 1978, se voit octroyer plus d'une colonne et une photo, ce qui est supérieur à ce que l'on peut lire de la famille Glackemeyer, dont le dynamisme a marqué la musique à Québec pendant plus d'un siècle. Une société de production de disques qui a duré dix ans (GRT of Canada, p.421), valait-elle 34 lignes, alors que les activités du premier maître de chapelle de Nouvelle-France, Martin Boutet, s'accommodent de 42 lignes? Parce que le compositeur de Hair est d'origine canadienne, on a droit à deux tiers de colonne sur cette comédie musicale rock des années 60, ce qui est supérieur au texte, au demeurant très neutre, consacré à Claude Vivier (31 lignes plus catalogue). Il est vrai que celui-ci n'était pas encore mort au moment de la rédaction d l'article.

C'est en consultant régulièrement l'Encyclopédie - ce que je fais pra-

tiquement chaque jour - que l'on remarque ses faiblesses et ses attraits. Parmi les premières, on peut regretter l'omission de certains interprètes qui s'affirment d'année en année; je pense par exemple à l'altiste d'origine israélienne Rivka Golani-Erdesz, pourtant arrivée au Canada en 1974. Pour m'en tenir simplement aux musiciens de Québec, je m'étonne de certains choix: pourquoi avoir inscrit Yves Bédard et oublié Liliane Garnier-Lesage, qui a une carrière internationale et quelques disques derrière elle? Que sont devenus Donald Thomson (à peine mentionné), Hermel Bruneau, Sylvain Doyon, Noëlla Genest, pourtant très actifs non seulement au Québec, mais au Canada? Quant aux compositeurs, où sont passés Marc Gagné, considéré dans l'Encyclopédie comme folkloriste, et Pierre Genest, ancien élève de Gilles Tremblay et aujourd'hui directeur général des Conservatoires du Quebec? Ils sont au moins aussi productifs que certains de leurs jeunes confrères de Montréal nés à la fin des années 40 et inscrits dans l'Encyclopédie.

Si l'on peut donc ne pas être d'accord avec les critères de sélection des directeurs de l'Encyclopédie - ce dont ils se justifient à la page XIV de l'Introduction de leur ouvrage - on peut aussi être étonné de l'attribution de certains sujets à des collaborateurs éloignés; quelques articles ont été mis à jour dans l'édition française, comme en témoigne l'annonce de la mort du violiniste et chef d'orchestre Samuel Hersenhoren, survenue le 18 août 1982 (p.460); par contre, ni Frances Campbell ni Mark Miller, tous deux de Toronto, ne pouvaient être au courant de la disparition le 29 juillet 1979 de Maurice DeCelles, dont ils ont rédigé la biographie.

On trouvera parfois quelques naïvetés et inutilités dans des articles d'ordre général, tels la description minutieuse du fonctionnement de l'accordéon (p.3), l'histoire du dodécaphonisme (p.281) avant son introduction au Canada dans les années 40, ou ce préambule concernant l'hiver comme source d'inspiration musicale au Canada: "La saison d'hiver s'étend du 21 décembre au 21 mars." Ailleurs, c'est le bon vieil harmonium de nos campagnes qui se voit affublé du pluriel (p.488) sans doute pour ne pas prêter confusion avec le groupe populaire homonyme qu'il suit dans l'Encyclopédie. Un sérieux ménage s'imposera lors d'une nouvelle édition de cet ouvrage dont les archives sont versées dans des universités reconnues.

Au nombre des qualités de l'Encyclopédie de la musique au Canada, mentionnons la clarté de la présentation des textes, des catalogues et des références bibliographiques, l'index supplémentaire qui permet de retracer tout nom propre cité dans le corps d'un article. Pour un ouvrage de cette envergure, rares sont les coquilles et les erreurs de parcours d'impression (comme à la page 550, où l'on voit que Joseph Lajeunesse est devenu veuf en 1956, alors qu'il faudrait lire, bien sûr, 1856). Ce qui retiendra l'attention du lecteur, c'est l'extraordinaire diversité des sujets traités: grâce à l'Encyclopédie, on assiste à un décloisonnement des genres musicaux et des activités de toutes les régions du Canada, ce qui est exceptionnel et mérite d'être signalé. On apprend aussi une foule de détails intéressants: par exemple, que le célère grand magasin Eaton, de Toronto, renfermait, jusqu'a sa fermeture en 1977, un auditorium longtemps considéré comme l'une des meilleures salles de concert du Canada (p.300), et que le personnel du magasin fonda en 1919 une compagnie d'opérette! En con-

sultant les lettres K et Z, on prend conscience de l'importante contribution musicale des artistes d'origine germanique, russe, ou polonaise. À propos, saviez-vous qui a l'honneur de conclure l'Encyclopédie? Eh bien c'est un certain Peter Zvankin (1879-1975) compositeur d'origine russe, qui fit carrière à Winnipeg.

Offerte à un prix très raisonnable, cette Encyclopédie de la musique au Canada devrait trouver sa place partout où l'on s'interesse à la musique.

-Irène Bresson
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A Theory for all music: problems and solutions in the analysis of non-western forms, by Jay Rahn. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983. (290p., $35.00)

"How can one best interpret all music?" This is the arresting question which Rahn poses at the outset. Until recently, serious scholars would have considered such a question to be preposterous. However, pioneering work of Benjamin Boretz ("Meta-Variations...", Perspectives of new music: 8/1, 1-74; 8/2, 49-111; 9/1, 23-42; 10/1, 232-270; 11/1, 146-223) has resulted in a system which, Rahn claims, contains the seeds of a universal theory. His goal in the present study is to broaden the scope of Boretz' theory so that it might truly be applicable to all music.

The initial problem Rahn faces is the choice of an appropriate basis for interpreting all music. He rejects the traditional bases - mentalistic, cultural and psychological - in favor of a reliance on raw data, the observables of the music itself. He next considers the criteria which must be met if a theory is to be solidly conceived and universally applicable. Such a theory should be consistent with the observables, yet transcend them. It must be complete, self-contained, objective, determinate, and uniquely identify the work being examined. In addition, if a theory is to be elegant rather than merely adequate, it should establish the greatest number of similarities among the values and relationships by which the observables are interpreted, invoke the smallest number of undefined concepts, and achieve the closest approximation to the observables.

These preliminary considerations occupy a somewhat excessive fifty-two pages of the book. Eventually, however, we are introduced to the theory itself. He begins by listing undefined, primal concepts, including those of formal logic and set theory as well as those of specifically musical significance, such as pitch, moment, intensity, interval, duration, precedence, altitude and adjacency. The concepts and relationships invoked are few in number, and are operationally definable. Furthermore, their interpretations are themselves subject to determinate evaluation, a hallmark of maturity in any field of inquiry.

Rahn's theory involves the familiar method of viewing a piece of music on multiple levels. The immediate details of the piece are viewed as

insertions into or projections from its deeper structure. All relationships that are based on pitches have parallels that are based on moments (i.e., points in time), and vice versa. The rhythmic attacks in a piece of music can be reduced, by the processes of rotation and interference, to a resultant pulsation. (The analogy between Rahn's method here and that proposed by Joseph Schillinger four decades ago is inescapable.) Similar processes yield an underlying gamut in the realm of pitch. The relationship between various levels in the structure of a piece are determined by subjecting adjacencies within these basic values to the process of bisection. (The term "bisection" is understood by Rahn to include any value from one third to one half of the whole.) A hierarchy of pitches is determined which supports and coordinated with the particular bisection chosen; the "orienting" pitch or pitches have a "tonic" function, to which all other pitches must "resolve". A similar hierarchy is established for moments or durations. Indeed, the orienting values of the two realms, pitch and time, are almost invariably seen to intersect at strategic points in a mutually reinforcing relationship.

The basic principles described above are amplified by notions of precedence, altitude, proximity, intensity and timbre. The intricacies of the theory, while not difficult to understand, are too detailed to include here. Suffice it to say that Rahn posits relations of logic, identity and adjacency on various integrated levels in a piece of music.

A particularly valuable aspect of Rahn's approach is the practical application of his theoretical concepts, first to individual pieces of non-Western music, then to entire repertoires of such pieces. The resulting interpretations convincingly demonstrate the flexibility of the theory. However, one wonders about the title, A Theory for all music. Rahn himself expresses reservations about its applicability to certain pieces, such as those based on chance principles. This reviewer would extend those reservations to any pieces in which oriental values are not evident. How is one to find a meaningful resultant pulsation for a piece in which there is no common durational norm? Similarly, how is one to determine the referential gamut for a piece whose pitches are freely chosen from the entire sound continuum? The above reservations notwithstanding, it is fair to say that the theory does indeed seem applicable to a large body of non-Western forms.

Several technical errors mar this otherwise excellent study. Some are trivial (e.g., typographical error "stophe", p. 111; spelling error "irresistable", p. 191) others are far more serious. For example, the same figure numbers are used twice in a number of instances for entirely different figures, and some figures appear out of order. The resultant confusion for the reader is regrettable.

A Theory for all music is clearly aimed at serious and knowledgeable scholars in the fields of ethnomusicology and music theory: it is not an easy book to read. In his desire to be comprehensive, Rahn is occasionally deflected from the most direct path to his goal. However, in the process of exploring some of the tangential issues, he reveals

more than a passing acquaintance with other disciplines, such as philosophy, mathematics, psychology, sociology and physics. The breadth and scope of his extramusical knowledge lend considerable authority to his central arguments. Rahn's work is thoughtful, and thought-provoking; it is a valuable addition to the literature.

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Milestones I: The music and times of Miles Davis to 1960, by Jack Chambers. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983. (xii, 345p., $24.95)

The Canadian jazz discography 1916-1980, by Jack Litchfield. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982. (945 p., $75.00)

These two new items from the University of Toronto Press are both clearly essential purchases for any music or public library.

Milestones I is the first of two volumes documenting the career of one of the most popular and controversial of all the major jazz innovators. It covers the period during which Miles' most innovative and influential creative contributions to jazz as an evolving art form were made. (Davis' later work, although easily as influential on the jazz scene, was either more derivative, as in the 1960's, or actually an undermining trend towards pop acceptance and away from artistic integrity. It will be very interesting to see how Chambers handles this material in volume 2: the recent one-volume study of the same subject, Miles Davis, by Ian Carr, for example, shows as much enthusiasm for Miles' evolution into a rock musician as for his work in jazz.)

This work is easily the most thorough and insightful study of Davis to date. I found it annoying in only two respects: first, the discography is integrated throughout the text, rather than cleanly displayed at the end of the book. It is therefore necessary to scan the entire text to examine Davis' recorded legacy. Fortunately, at least tune titles are indexed. Less fortunately, Chambers misses some important unissued sessions which have been circulating among collectors for many years. An appearance on the Steve Allen Show in 1955 with the quintet including Coltrane, for example, isn't even mentioned, although a tape from Philadelphia by the same group on 8 December 1956 is referred to as apparently existing (I've had copies for about 15 years). My second complaint is the lack of indexing of the many interesting photos, which seem scattered almost carelessly through the text, and like discographical information, must be scanned for. But these relatively minor flaws are mere quibbles in the face of Chambers' excellent presentation and analyses of Davis' life and work.

The Canadian Jazz Discography 1916-1980 by Jack Litchfield is a monumental undertaking and major contribution to jazz discography as well as to the Canadian jazz scene. It is easy to read and has a cross-index of sidemen and tune titles. There are sections on movies and

piano rolls. The main problem with this work is Litchfield's definition of "Canadian" for inclusion. "To qualify for inclusion in this book, a jazz record must have been either recorded in Canada, or recorded outside Canada by an artist who was residing, temporarily or permanently, in Canada at the time the recording was made" (from the Introduction, p.6). This allows, for example, the inclusion of the famed Charlie Parker / Dizzy Gillespie Massey Hall concert recorded in Toronto in 1953, while excluding some of the greatest Canadians to make contributions to jazz, such as Georgie Auld or Gil Evans (to use examples not mentioned by Litchfield). In other words, no matter who it was, if it was recorded in Canada it's "in" - but if a Canadian, no matter how important, was living elsewhere at the time, you won't find much. Auld for example, was surely one of the most interesting soloists of the Swing Era, recording with Bunny Berigan, Artie Shaw, and Benny Goodman before starting his own band, which included many major jazz figures of the 1940's, and is still active and recording, among other things providing Robert De Niro's sax soundtrack to the movie "New York, New York". Here he is listed only as a sideman on a Jack Kane record made in Los Angeles in 1958. Kane, you see, qualified due to his long involvement on the Toronto scene, although he was born in England, and never recorded in Canada. But again, aside from the mild mind-bending it takes to cope with this sort of thing, this is a major reference tool in the field, and indispensable for any Canadian (at least) music or public library. And (wishful thinking) if any radio stations programming jazz need a guide for Canadian content, this work could help a lot.

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THE SHAKESPEARE MUSIC CATALOGUE *

In order to indicate the purpose and nature of the Shakespeare Music catalogue, let me begin by reviewing briefly the work of the past eleven years which has led up to it. In the early 1970s David Thatcher, my research colleague, and I were preparing for CBC radio a documentary on Thomas Hardy, and I wanted to find some settings of Hardy texts which were not the best known ones but which, nevertheless, deserved to be heard. The usual search of available catalogues ensued, and I discovered that not all sources gave the same information, or indeed, the details I needed in order to decide what scores to order. Certainly, I found enough for the programme, but felt, as I have said on other occassions, as if I had fallen into a bibliographic elephant trap. We discussed the problem with librarians, who confirmed that there was a need for a comprehensive reference volume which would not only list, for literary works by major authors, composers' names, titles and dates of composition and/or publication, but also provide information regarding the forms of the works and vocal and instrumental forces, publication and/or location details, etc. We then drew up a prospectus for such a volume and sent it out to about ten of the most qualified

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